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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/685,745

10/15/2003

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EXAMINER

PHILOGENE, PEDRO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3733

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

04/07/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/685,745	Applicant(s) EISERMANN, LUKAS	
	Examiner Pedro Philogene	Art Unit 3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 11 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-14 and 23-30 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-14 and 23-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/3/07</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Objections

Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities: in claim 1, line 6, before "shells" insert --second--. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 3-14, 23-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Gauchet (6,582,466) in view of Fehling et al. (6,770,094).

With respect to claims 1, 27, 30 Gauchet discloses a disc replacement device comprising a first shell (4), a second shell (4) a fulcrum (14) disposed between the first and second shells, wherein the fulcrum is a spherical ball bearing, as set forth in column 4, lines 30-31, having a substantially spherical surface; and a damping sleeve (8), as best seen in FIG.2, disposed between the first and second shells, wherein each of the first shell and second shell comprises a first surface (9) adapted for articulation relative to the fulcrum the first surface having a first surface shape (the flat 9) different from the spherical surface., wherein the damping sleeve is configured to produce a cavity for receiving a lubricating medium (12), an internal ring as best seen in black in FIG.4. The first surface shape comprises a concave surface, an irregular surface and a spherical shape having a diameter different than a diameter of the spherical surface of the tibial bearing; as best seen in FIG.4.

It is noted that Gauchet did not teach of a second surface adapted for coupling with the damping sleeve, the first surface being separated from the second surface; as claimed by applicant. However, in similar art, Fehling et al provides the evidence of the use of an implant having a second surface adapted for coupling with the damping sleeve, the first surface being separated from the second surface in order to avoid interference with the mobility of the prosthesis.

Therefore, given the teaching of Fehling et al., it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Gauchet, as taught by Fehling et al, in order to avoid interference with the mobility of the implant.

With respect to claims 3, 6-13, 24, 25, 28,29, the above combination of references discloses all the limitations; such as the first surface being flat, the damping sleeve is configured to provide flexibility between the first and second shell surfaces, the shell further comprises a closure portion about the second surface, the first surface is separated from the second surface by a step-like change in height, the damping sleeve forms a wall extending around the ball-bearing in a manner that encloses the ball bearing between the damping sleeve and the first and second shells, the wall having a thickness that varies from one cross-section to another, the shell comprises a metal substance, the shell comprises shape memory alloys, the shell comprises an orthopedic articular bearing material, the sleeve comprises silicone, the damping sleeve comprises shape memory alloys, as set forth in column 2, lines 1-67, column 3, lines 1-67, column

4, lines 1-46, and as best seen in FIGS.1-4 of Gauchet ; and as best seen in FIGS.1-4 of Fehling et al.

Response to Amendment

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1, 3-14, 23-30 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (571) 272-4716. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272 - 4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Pedro Philogene/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3733
April 1, 2008